

TOWN OF CHESTER
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING

November 24, 2015
Minutes

PRESENT: John DeBenedetti; Tom Bock; William Lindsay; Heather Chase; Arne Jonynas;
David Pisha

VISITORS: Julie Hance; Shawn Cunningham; Edward Huse; Cil Mathews; Claudio Veliz;
Lynne Reed; Steven Davis; Nancy Davis; Donna Allen; Ron Patch; Graham
Kennedy; Richard Cloud; Frank Bidwell; Tory Spater; Jeff Holden

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman DeBenedetti.

The Selectboard agreed to add the Chester Snowmobile Club request to the agenda for this evening.

1. APPROVE MINUTES:

November 18, 2015:

A motion was made by William Lindsay to approve the November 18, 2015 minutes of the Chester Selectboard Special meeting with the following changes. Seconded by Tom Bock. The motion passed.

Page 1, Approve Minutes. correct spelling of Tom Bock's name

Page 2, Item 7, last sentence of 1st paragraph, add statement that the focus of the Core program is to stop speeding, not to increase revenue.

2. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

There were no citizen's comments.

3. CHESTER SNOWMOBILE CLUB:

The Chester Snowmobile Club has requested permission to use portions of town roads as snowmobile trails during the 2015/2016 season. John DeBenedetti read the list of requested sections of road.

A motion was made by Tom Bock to grant permission to the Chester Snowmobile Club to use the roads identified during the 2015/2016 season. Seconded by Arne Jonynas. The motion passed.

Arne Jonynas requested that when the snowmobiling season is done, a cable or sign be placed across the trails at their access point to the town forest to prevent ATV usage. Discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Tom Bock to authorize David Pisha to sign the Landowner Permission Form. Seconded by Arne Jonynas. The motion passed.

4. WATER & SEWER BUDGETS:

David Pisha reviewed the proposed Water and Sewer Budgets. He stated that he has raised revenues/fees slightly in both departments. There are no significant changes from last year. Expenses are relatively the same. David Pisha stated the last quarter billing for 2015 will be going out next week and bills will be due at the end of the year. David Pisha stated that there will be a lot of activity in the water department next year. He stated that we are still waiting on reimbursement for the contracted services expenses.

Arne Jonynas questioned the slight increase in payroll. Jeff Holden stated that there will be a new person hired for the Sewer Department since Barry Goodrich is retiring. He is hoping to have the new person hired in January so there will be an additional payroll expense for a couple of months.

John DeBenedetti questioned which pump station is being upgraded in the capital plan. Jeff Holden explained that it is the pump station on Pleasant Street. The cutters are wearing out due to cleaning rags being flushed into the system and binding up the pumps.

Tom Bock questioned the BOD levels. Jeff Holden stated that this is due primarily to Drew's depositing the oils and greases into the system. He feels confident that the new treatment system that Drew's is installing should help alleviate this issue. Drew's will need a discharge permit from the State of Vermont which will require a certified operator to manage the discharge. David Pisha noted that there is an increase in BOD revenues due to the fines that are being imposed for excessive BOD discharge.

William Lindsay questioned the status of the Church Street hydrant. Jeff Holden stated that the leak has been fixed. However, he is not confident in turning the hydrant back on at this point as the ground has not settled yet and is very wet and soft. He stated that he may need to replace this hydrant next year.

5. 2016 CAPITAL PLAN:

David Pisha presented a revised version of the 2016 Capital Plan. Discussion ensued regarding a power point presentation of the Capital Plan for Town Meeting.

David Pisha reviewed the various options with the Selectboard. David Pisha noted that the Selectboard is already using debt payment options to pay off existing equipment. We currently use leases which are very similar to bonding. David Pisha suggested that the paving bond not be taken out until the 2 for 1 paving grant becomes available again for Route 35. He stated that

Coach Road, Popple Dungeon Road and High Street are the likely candidates for the paving bond. He also stated that Mountain View needs to be paved as well. However this should wait until the stormwater issue has been resolved. Julie Hance is investigating a potential grant to obtain a scoping study for this project. Option 1 also includes the addition of the sewer truck with plow as well as removing money for the town hall building.

David Pisha noted that the Pumper can also be financed for 10 years instead of 5 if desired and be taken as a separate bond along with the town hall repairs. Discussion ensued regarding the town hall repairs and phasing the project to be completed over a few years and the depth of the assessment desired. It was agreed that David Pisha will get a cost of an assessment for Town Hall. John DeBenedetti questioned the \$15,000.00 that the Highway Department is carrying for insulating the ceiling of the Town Garage. It was determined that the money is within the budget, not the capital plan.

Arne Jonynas expressed concerns regarding long term bonding plans that will rely on future boards and future votes. David Pisha explained that the proposed plan is a framework for future boards to follow and will help to stabilize upcoming expenses of the future. Arne Jonynas also suggested that perhaps the transfer into the capital plan should be increased over the years as well.

The Selectboard agreed that they would like to pursue Option 2 of the Capital Plan. David Pisha will show a gradual increase in the transfer into the capital plan and add an expense line for town hall assessment and potential renovation. Discussion further ensued regarding the paving needs and the bond series that would get the town caught up on back errors made. David Pisha reviewed the list of department needs that would be purchased through the Series 1 Bond.

John DeBenedetti confirmed that the plan is to take two bonds next year, one for the Series 1 Bond and a second one for paving. In 2017, the third bond for paving would be introduced and in 2018 two more paving bonds would be introduced.

The Selectboard discussed the list of items requested in the Series 1 Bond. They reviewed which items should be kept within the bond and which items should just go into the General Fund. David Pisha also noted then when bonding for these items, generations of the future are paying for what they are using.

The Selectboard discussed the revenues and expenses that are still outstanding that should come in by the end of the year.

6. FINANCIAL UPDATES:

David Pisha stated that tax revenues are not where they were last year at the end of October. However, expenses in Public Works are well below last year and the school transfer is well below last year. David Pisha reported that overall, the delinquency collection is up over last year. John DeBenedetti questioned the fire department revenue being lower than 2014 which is due to a hazmat reimbursement in 2014 which did not come in 2015. Public Work expenses are down. However, there are expenses that have not yet been paid out for 2015.

David Pisha reviewed that in reviewing Budget to Actual, revenues are showing an increase and expenses are showing a decrease. He noted that there is likely a timing issue which is showing Public Works expenses decreased. David Pisha stated that \$6,760 has been received from Pike for payroll. There is still outstanding \$22,685 to be collected.

Discussion ensued regarding the Windsor County budget figure. David Pisha will track down the budget.

John DeBenedetti questioned the payroll budget for Public Works. David Pisha stated that he will review these lines. David Pisha also confirmed that all transfers for water, sewer and library have been done and all voted articles are paid. Cil Mathews stated that there still remains the school transfer and the fire hydrant transfer. John DeBenedetti asked to see the Budget Summary sheet at the next meeting. Cil Mathews noted that the transfers into the Capital Plan have not been completed at this time.

David Pisha stated that water fees are up from last year. The net income is positive if taking out the contracted services line.

David Pisha stated that sewer fees are well ahead of last year due to fines, excess BOD charges and income from connections. The bond payment went out early this year compared to also year, but there is still a positive bottom line.

David Pisha stated the Tax Sale went poorly with only one property selling. He noted that the delinquent water and sewer accounts are getting caught up and revenues are ahead.

David Pisha stated that the ambulance report shows very little change. Transfers are staying at about the same as last year. Ambulance revenues are still down.

David Pisha stated that the Economic Development loans are not current. He will be visiting those borrowers soon.

7. NEW BUSINESS/NEXT AGENDA:

The Selectboard agreed that the budget will be on the next agenda. David Pisha will present the budget summary sheet. David Pisha stated that Dan Cook and Matt McCarthy will be at the next meeting to present their budgets. The Selectboard discussed the need to raise the fees for cemetery lots. David Pisha will talk with the Cemetery Sexton. William Lindsay also noted that the transfer from the Trustee of Public Funds still needs to be made.

The Selectboard discussed the inventory of items brought from the Yosemite Fire House to the Bargain Corner.

Shawn Cunningham stated that he will be running an article regarding a program that the State of Vermont is running for those who have lost their licenses due to unpaid parking tickets.

8. ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Tom Bock to adjourn. Seconded by Heather Chase. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Julie Hance
Secretary of the Select Board

Heather Chase
Clerk of the Select Board

The SAPA-TV recording of this meeting is hereby made a part of the permanent minute record of this meeting.